

OFFICIAL MINUTES
SPECIAL PERSONNEL BOARD MEETING
March 21, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting began at 5:30 p.m. in Conference Room 113 at City Hall

ROLL CALL

Present: Ed Comerford and Joe Roberts

City Staff: Tami Yuki (Assistant City Manager), Connie Jackson (City Manager), Monica Walker (HR Manager), Dave Downing (Fire Chief)

REVIEW OF AGENDA

No change to the order of the agenda

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Personnel Board Member Joe Roberts made a motion to approve the September 19, 2016 minutes and Personnel Board Vice Chair Ed Comerford seconded the motion. Motion approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

a. Extend Entry Level Firefighter Eligibility List

Fire Chief Dave Downing explained that the current Firefighter eligibility list was established in April 2016 and is slated to expire in April 2017. The Fire Department recently conducted interviews with the remaining candidates, and as a result, began backgrounds on two (2) candidates in preparation for the September 2017 fall Firefighter Academy. Should the current candidates fail backgrounds, (which could take up to two (2) months to complete, there would not be sufficient time to do another recruitment, and the City would be unable to place candidates in the Academy. However, an extension of the current list would allow the City to have an active list from which to quickly choose remaining qualified candidates and place them in the fall Firefighter Academy.

Chief Downing also reported that if the list were extended until September, when it expires in September, it would allow a new recruitment to be conducted in anticipation of the Spring Firefighter Academy. This is a new model that the County Chiefs have been moving towards. Due to retirements in December, it makes more sense to learn of vacancies in December, followed by the ability to hold a Spring academy (rather than waiting almost an entire year until fall).

Chief Downing mentioned that Laterals were also interviewed recently. One of the Fire Department's initiatives is to initiate a year-long continuous Lateral Firefighter recruitment (similar to Police) which would recruit for experienced candidates at any of the time of the year when a vacancy opens up. The Fire Department anticipates up to four (4) vacancies in the coming year. The Department has a very new workforce. 16 new firefighters were hired in the last four (4) years, which comprises almost half the Department. If the Department has an opportunity to hire a Lateral Firefighter (especially within the County) that has previous experience, it reduces the need to send the employee to the Academy, and it also reduces the training period. Laterals take approximately one year to become fully trained, whereas Entry-Level Firefighters can take up to three years to become fully trained.

Personnel Board Vice Chair Comerford asked if Human Resources was happy with the ethnic and gender diversity of the firefighter recruitment. Human Resources Manager Monica Walker said that the applicants are very diverse and come from all different backgrounds. Assistant City Manager Tami Yuki also commented that last year's applicant pool was very diverse, and that the City is looking at an internship program that will seek out candidates with diverse backgrounds that may not have an opportunity otherwise. Chief Dave Downing stated that in addition to well-rounded candidates in the College of San Mateo's program, the City and Department is looking towards diversifying the internship pool by going out in the community and advertising opportunities. The Department's recent hires are very

diverse as well; almost 50% of the most recently hired Firefighters are of diverse backgrounds, including one female Firefighter.

Personnel Board Member Joe Roberts motioned to extend the Entry-Level Firefighter eligibility list for six months until September 26, 2017, and it was seconded by Personnel Board Vice Chair Ed Comerford. Motion approved.

Fire Chief Dave Downing left the meeting.

b. Job Descriptions

I. Finance Director

Assistant City Manager Tami Yuki introduced the job descriptions. In 2015, the passage of Measures R and U converted the positions of City Clerk and City Treasurer into “appointed” positions. The terms of the two current (elected) incumbents will expire at the end of 2017.

City Manager Jackson stated that by placing the measures on the ballot in 2015, the City Council had deliberately intended to provide ample time before current terms would expire in 2017 to allow for transition time and consideration. After the ballot measures passed, the City Council requested discussion about how they wanted to proceed with the appointment of the two positions would be appointed. City Staff surveyed over 20 cities in San Mateo County with respect to how the functions of both the City Treasurer and the City Clerk functions are handled in cities. The survey revealed that only 3 cities have an elected City Treasurer, while the remaining 17 cities have an appointed City Treasurer. The state of California also shows a trend towards appointed city treasurers. In the cities where City Treasurer is appointed, as well as throughout the state of California, there is also a common standard for the treasurer duties to be integrated into the professional duties and job classification of the Finance Director or other high-level Finance staff. There has been a trend towards position both being appointed (versus elected) and the job duties being integrated into a professional Finance position (as opposed to being a standalone responsibility). The reason is because the job duties of Treasurer are fairly limited, centered around oversight of the City’s investment funds, “surplus funds” not needed for day-to-day activities and expenditures, used for 1) safety 2) liquidity, and 3) yield, in that order. It’s not an active maximizing investment return type of activity. In a municipal environment, the protection of the principal is the primary concern as opposed to yield, and risk-taking is minimal. Our current investments are the County pool, local agency investment fund (statewide local agency fund where pool resources are invested under the management of professional portfolio managers), and United States treasuries. Functions are typically integrated into a Finance staff position. Our Finance Director position is currently vacant, giving rise to opportunity revise the job description, in order to 1) incorporate the Treasurer functions and 2) update it for the recruitment. This will not be an issue for candidates because these changes are the “norm” and will be expected by the candidates.

City Manager Jackson continued to explain that the current elected City Treasurer is a part-time responsibility and individual is paid on a part-time basis and devotes a few hours per week on the Treasurer’s own schedule. Both the current elected City Clerk and current elected City Treasurer supported the ballot measure and attended the City Council meeting where the appointed process was discussed. Both Clerk and Treasurer spoke in favor of the general concepts. In regards to the City Clerk discussion, the discussion centered on what is common in San Mateo County was regarding the City Clerk, which is that it is commonly an appointed position. There are only three cities in which this position is elected by the voters. In cities where the City Clerk position is appointed, the position is a critical position within the organization and requires a dedicated capacity. The City does not currently have a job description, and the City Council needs to adopt it in order for the City to recruit and appoint for the position by the end of this year. Of the 17 cities that appoint, there are two (Redwood City and East Palo Alto) where the City Council appoints the City Clerk; in all the other cities, the City Clerk is appointed by the City Manager similarly to all other staff positions in the City. In East Palo Alto, the City Manager holds the dual position of City Manager/City Clerk which is the reason it is appointed by Council. The issues is: 1) who appoints, and 2) to whom is the City Clerk function responsible. This information was presented to City Council, and the City Council assigned the further review/research to a subcommittee consisting of Mayor Jim Ruane and Councilmember Marty Medina. When the subcommittee met, the current elected

City Treasurer attended the meeting and expressed concern about segregation of duties and financial integrity in the City's financial operations and management should the Treasurer functions be incorporated into the Finance position (although he did not make comment at the aforementioned City Council meeting). The current Treasurer's comments were heard and understood by the Council, but the subcommittee gave consensus to proceed as previously recommended. As it relates to the City Clerk, the subcommittee was divided as to whom should appoint and to whom the City Clerk should report. The Council left it up to the Personnel Board and City staff to determine how functions should be handled. The job description for City Clerk left it open as to whom the position should report (City Manager and/or City Council). Only two positions in the City (City Manager and City Attorney) are appointed by the City Council; all other employees are responsible through the chain of command to the City Manager. At this point, who appoints City Clerk is left open for consideration. With an elected City Clerk, there is a different situation. The City Clerk is responsible at the same level as the City Council and the job duties are articulated by the City code, and the incumbent has more discretion.

Assistant City Manager Yuki responded to a question about whether the City Clerk and City Treasurer attended meetings. The City Treasurer presents an annual report to the City Council. The City Clerk is present at every meeting, to record the vote(s), manage public comments at the podium, and taking minutes at the meeting.

Member Roberts asked if we had reviewed the Finance Director job description a few years ago, and Assistant City Manager Yuki answered that it was the Financial Services Manager job description which was reviewed.

Vice Chair Comerford stated that he was under the presumption that the duties spelled out in the City's Municipal Code have been transferred verbatim to ensure that the duties were captured. Assistant City Manager Yuki explained that the Muni Code description is very broad. Vice Chair Comerford requested that the Muni Code be used as a starting point and then a further refinement can be done to capture the right words. Assistant City Manager Yuki explained that the "treasury functions" were added to the existing Finance Director job description; since it hasn't been revised in awhile, the job description was revised to 1) update outdated terms 2) incorporate treasury functions 3) moved functions around to place more important ones towards the beginning (which makes it appear that there are many strikethroughs) and 4) increase education and experience.

Vice Chair Comerford stated that "budget" functions were only mentioned in passing under the essential duties, and in his experience budget matters are a pretty important function of the Finance Director's job. He asked who is responsible for the budget. Assistant City Manager Yuki explained that the Finance Director is responsible for the overall budget, but the Financial Services Manager and the Accounting Manager and Finance staff have a joint responsibility in managing the technical aspects and producing the budget. Vice Chair Comerford preferred to see something more definitive when it comes to "budget" responsibilities outlined in the job description. Although the Financial Services Manager and the Accounting Manager are instrumental to the budget, the Finance Director is the point person. Vice Chair Comerford would like to add verbiage about more detail regarding budget duties (for example, instead of "and budget" include another paragraph about **"overall responsibility for budget."**).

Assistant City Manager Yuki indicated that there is a paragraph on the second page indicating "Performs cost control activities; monitors revenues and expenditures to assure sound fiscal control; prepares budget documents; assures effective and efficient use of budgeted funds, personnel, materials, facilities, and time."

Vice Chair Comerford stated that the wording "prepares budget documents" indicates that the Finance Director is receiving data and placing it together in budget documents, rather than actually having control over the budget. It does not indicate planning or control, but rather indicates taking information that someone is giving to him/her. It does not indicate what a Finance manager does. His suggested wording was as follows: **"overall responsibility for preparation of annual budget, ensuring effective and efficient use of budgeted funds,"** etc.

City Manager Jackson added a request to include **"ensuring sufficient resources to support program policy objectives,"** and **"creating capital improvement budgets consistent with City Council policy and overall City work program."**

Assistant City Manager Yuki added verbiage **“oversee preparation of annual City budget.”**

Vice Chair Comerford stated that under City Treasurer Duties Charter A “To receive and safe keep all money coming into his hands as Treasurer.” He also mentioned that at the top of Page 2 (of the job description) there is a section about Treasurer function, and asked if we need to add something to conform with the budget about keeping the money safe? Do we need to have the same language?

Member Roberts offered the wording “Cost control activities, monitor revenues...”

Vice Chair Comerford is thinking that we need the same language to conform with the City charter, but perhaps that is something that needs review by the City Attorney.

City Manager Jackson said that the investment policy is separate from this, and it implements the intent of safekeeping.

Assistant City Manager Yuki stated that discussed this with City Attorney, and if these duties are now being incorporated into the Finance Director job description, this section of the Muni Code may need to be revised. This language may be entirely gone or revised at some point, because if there is no City Treasurer, there is no need to keep it in the Muni Code.

Member Roberts would like to revise the wording in second paragraph to “Maintains financial records” to **“Maintains City’s financial records”** and “Communicates official plans, policies and procedures to staff and the general public” to **“Communicates official plans policies and procedures verbally or in written form to staff and the general public.”**

Vice Chair Comerford requested revising wording for “Directs the preparation of state and Federal reports, including tax reports,” to read **“Directs the preparation of state and federal financial reports, including tax reports.”**

Vice Chair Comerford asked whether the management of Finance’s information system falls under the Finance Director or IT Staff. Assistant Manager Yuki stated that it is a joint effort: IT assists with maintaining the program, but experts in the Finance department customize the reports and the routing of financial systems information.

Vice Chair Comerford requested revising wording for “Research and prepare technical and administrative reports and studies” to **“Research and prepare financial and administrative reports and studies.”**

Vice Chair Comerford inquired about the educational requirements, specifically the degree requirement, and asked what defines a “closely related field.” The job description mentions “accounting, finance, business or public administration” and the only missing related degree he identified was “economics,” (which he was fine with adding). He understood that the City is trying to be broad and inclusive in their educational requirement, but wondered about whether an applicant who does not (already) have a degree in accounting, finance, business or public administration, is a suitable candidate to be running a Finance department. Assistant City Manager Yuki explained that sometimes employees may not have an accounting degree, but could have worked in a Finance department as an analyst, and maybe one day utilize that experience to oversee the Finance department. Vice Chair Comerford said that if those employees are interested in being a Finance Director, there is nothing stopping those types of employees from going back to school and picking up a Finance degree. City Manager Jackson commented that being at a Director level requires a broad understanding and perspective, and the technical financial aspects are typically delivered at the lower level. Vice Chair Comerford commented that the subordinate level positions (Financial Services Manager and Accounting Manager) both have the “closely related” level, and also have stricter educational requirements than the Finance Director position (specifically CPA and Masters degree preferred), but this is illogical. Assistant City Manager Yuki surveyed the market and found that half of the Director positions have a broad degree requirement and the other half require CPA/Masters degree preferred. Vice Chair Comerford commented that if Member Roberts is his boss, Comerford’s expectation is that Member Roberts has a higher degree requirement. If a CPA and/or Masters degree is preferred for the lower-level jobs, then it should also be preferred for the higher-level jobs. Assistant City Manager said that the Director-level positions have historically been hard to recruit

for and would hate for this to be an obstacle and make candidates believe that the City is looking for a strictly technical person, or someone who can provide leadership. Member Roberts commented that if someone is going to be expected to direct others, the City should seek someone who leads rather than actually do the technical work. Vice Chair Comerford commented that the degree is meant to train someone to be a better leader. City Manager Jackson said its' important to have a broad view and understand how to manage people, and direct the resources of the organization, which is a different skillset than keeping the books. Assistant City Manager Yuki stated that the job description does not prevent the City from screening for the most highly qualified applicants who do possess a Masters degree or CPA, but since it has been historically difficult attracting candidates, the City does would prefer to be as inclusive as possible. City Manager Jackson stated that it has always been hard to attract good Finance Director candidates, in good economic times or bad. Member Roberts stated that the educational requirements are fine the way it is.

Vice Chair Comerford would like to standardize the format of the minimum qualifications with other job descriptions to read "MQs, ability to, knowledge of, ..."

Assistant City Manager Tami Yuki requested that "mainframe computer system" be revised to "**computer system**" only.

Personnel Board Vice Chair Ed Comerford motioned to approve the Finance Director job description with changes as needed, and it was seconded by Personnel Board Member Joe Roberts. Motion approved.

II. City Clerk

Vice Chair Comerford asked if the City charter would be revised as a result of the job description, and Assistant City Manager said it would be revised in terms of job duties and supervision received and that the Council will have further discussion regarding this. City Manager Jackson stated that the City Council reviews all job descriptions that are seen by the Personnel Board.

Vice Chair Ed Comerford had a question about why "knowledge of mathematics" is in the job description, and Assistant City Manager stated that duties may include administering the budget.

Assistant City Manager stated that **a requirement for driver's license** needs to be added.

City Manager Jackson indicated that the requirement for "two years experience in a City Clerk's office" is very important because the experience is very specific and critical as it relates to a municipal organization, plus "five years progressive experience" is important because it is a lead position.

City Manager Jackson recommended that the City Clerk also report to "**Assistant City Manager.**"

Personnel Board Vice Chair Ed Comerford motioned to approve the City Clerk job description pending final language being updated regarding supervision, and it was seconded by Personnel Board Member Joe Roberts. Motion approved.

c. Recruitment Information

Human Resources Manager Walker reported that the first page outlines all current eligibility lists and their respective expiration dates (except for the Entry-Level Firefighter recruitment, which was just extended through September 2017). Vice Chair Ed Comerford asked which other departments were anticipated to extend their list, and HR Manager Walker reported that all departments with eligibility lists expiring before October 2017 were asked if they wished to extend, and they all said no. It is too far out to predict which eligibility lists would be extended if their expiration date is past October 2017. The second page of recruitments are in different stages of the recruitment process (collecting applications, reviewing applications, scheduling interviews, etc.).

Member Joe Roberts asked if we are closer to selecting a Fire Chief. HR Manager Walker reported the City had been collecting applications online for a period, and have recently switched to the formal application process via CalOpps. As of this afternoon, there were four applicants for Fire Chief.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

No Comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Personnel Board Member Roberts motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm, seconded by Personnel Board Vice Chair Comerford.